

What is claimed is:

- Sub A 1. A container for transporting cargo on a flatbed vehicle, the container comprising:

a top wall structure,
a bottom wall structure opposing the top wall structure,
a front wall structure,
a rear wall structure opposing the front wall structure, and
a pair of sidewall structures disposed in opposing relation, the top wall structure, the bottom wall structure, the front wall structure, the rear wall structure and the sidewall structures being coupled so as to form an enclosed interior space,

the bottom wall structure having leg structures extending therefrom, the leg structures being spaced a sufficient length and being constructed and arranged to be received in recesses defined at opposing sides of a cargo carrying surface of the flatbed vehicle to mount the container with respect to the cargo carrying surface,

certain of said wall structures being constructed and arranged to be opened and closed to access the interior space.

2. The container of claim 1, in combination with the flatbed vehicle, the flatbed vehicle including the cargo carrying surface having the opposing sides, the opposing sides each having rail structure coupled to the associated side defining the recesses constructed and arranged to receive the leg structures.

3. The container of claim 2, wherein the bottom wall structure includes fork-receiving structure defining at least one pair of slots constructed and arranged to receive forks of a forklift.

4. The container of claim 3, wherein the fork receiving structure includes a pair of generally U-shaped members coupled to and extending from the bottom wall structure, the U-shaped members being in spaced relation and having a planar underside surface.

A, 5. The container of claim 4, wherein the fork receiving structure is constructed and arranged so that the planar underside surface of the U-shaped members contacts the cargo carrying surface when the container is carried by the flatbed vehicle.

6. The container of claim 1, wherein the bottom wall structure is generally rectangular with the leg structures including a leg extending from each corner of the bottom wall structure, each leg defining stops to control an extent to which the legs are received in the recesses.

7. The container of claim 1, wherein said certain wall structures include the top walls structure and the front wall structure.

8. The container of claim 7, further including locking structure constructed and arranged lock in a closed condition, the top wall structures together with the front wall structures.

9. The container of claim 1, wherein the top wall structure includes at least a first top panel pivotally coupled to one of the sidewall structures and at least a second top panel pivotally coupled to the other sidewall structure such that the entire top wall structure can be opened to access the interior space when the first and second top panels are pivoted with respect to their respective sidewall structure.

10. The container of claim 8, wherein each of the first and second top panels is coupled to a respective sidewall structure via a hinge connection, whereby to obtain a fully opened position of the top wall structure, the first top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the one sidewall structure and the second top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the other sidewall structure.

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11. The container of claim 10, wherein a pair of first top panels and a pair of second top panels are provided.
12. The container of claim 1, wherein the front wall structure includes a first front panel pivotally coupled to one of the sidewall structures and a second front panel pivotally coupled to the other sidewall structure such that the entire front wall structure can be opened to access the interior space when the first and second front panels are pivoted with respect to their respective sidewall structure.
13. The container of claim ^{12?} 11, wherein each of the first and second front panels is coupled to a respective sidewall structure via a double acting hinge connection.
14. The container of claim 1, wherein the top wall structure includes at least a first front panel coupled to one sidewall structure via a hinge connection and at least a second top panel coupled to the other sidewall structure via a hinge connection, whereby to obtain a fully opened position of the top wall structure, the first top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the one sidewall structure and the second top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the other sidewall structure.
15. The container of claim 14, wherein the front wall structure includes a first front panel coupled to one sidewall structure via a double acting hinge connection and a second front panel coupled to the other sidewall structure via a double acting hinge connection, whereby when the top wall structure is in the fully opened position thereof, to obtain a fully opened position of the front wall structure, the first front panel is constructed and arranged to move about the double acting hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the first top panel and the second front panel is constructed and arranged to move about the double acting hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the second top panel.

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16. The container of claim 15, wherein a pair of adjacent first top panels are provided defining a front first top panel and a rear first top panel, and pair of second top panels are provided defining a front second top panel and a rear second top panel.

17. The container of claim 16, further including locking structure constructed and arranged to permit all of the top panels and the front panels to be interlocked in a closed condition.

18. The container of claim 17, wherein the locking structure includes:

a first plate coupled to a top edge of one of the first top panels so as to extend over a top edge of the other first top panel,

a second plate coupled to a top edge of one of the second top panels so as to extend over a top edge of the other second top panel,

a third plate coupled to a top edge of one of the front top panels as to extend over a top edge of the other front top panel,

a fourth plate coupled to a top edge of one of the rear top panels so as to extend over a top edge of the other rear top panel,

a fifth plate coupled to a front edge of a front panel so as to extend over a front edge of the other front panel, and

a movable locking mechanism secured to one of the front panels including a lock constructed and arranged to be received in a recess in an edge of one of the front top panels so as to interlock all of the top panels and the front panels in the closed condition.

19. The container of claim 1, further including leg-receiving recesses in a top portion thereof constructed and arranged to receive leg structures of another said container such that said containers can be disposed in a vertically stacked arrangement.

20. The container of claim 19, further including guides operatively associated with certain of the leg-receiving recesses, the guides being constructed and

arranged to aid in inserting the legs into the leg-receiving recesses when stacking containers.

21. The container of claim 1 in combination with a cover, the cover being constructed and arranged to be received in the interior of the container so as to surround and cover cargo.

22. A container for transporting cargo on a flatbed vehicle, the container comprising:

a top wall structure,

a bottom wall structure opposing the top wall structure,

a front wall structure,

a rear wall structure opposing the front wall structure, and

a pair of sidewall structures disposed in opposing relation, the top wall structure, the bottom wall structure, the front wall structure, the rear wall structure and the sidewall structures being coupled so as to form an enclosed interior space,

the bottom wall structure having fork-receiving structure extending therefrom, the fork-receiving structure being constructed and arranged to receive forks of a forklift to move the container and, to support the container when the container is resting on a surface,

the top wall structure and the front wall structure being constructed and arranged to be opened and closed to place and store cargo in the interior space.

23. The container of claim 22, further including locking structure constructed and arranged to lock, in a closed condition, the top wall structure together with the front wall structure.

24. The container of claim 22, wherein the top wall structure includes at least a first top panel coupled to one sidewall structure via a hinge connection and at least a second top panel coupled to the other sidewall structure via a hinge connection, whereby to obtain a fully opened position of the top wall structure,

the first top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the one sidewall structure and the second top panel is constructed and arranged to move about the hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the other sidewall structure.

25. The container of claim 24, wherein the front wall structure includes a first front panel coupled to one sidewall structure via a double hinge connection and a second front panel coupled to the other sidewall structure via a double hinge connection, whereby when the top wall structure is in the fully opened position thereof, to obtain a fully opened position of the front wall structure, the first front panel is constructed and arranged to move about the double hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the first top panel and the second front panel is constructed and arranged to move about the double hinge connection thereof to be generally adjacent to the second top panel.
26. The container of claim 25, wherein a pair of first top panels and a pair of second top panels are provided.
27. The container of claim 22, wherein the bottom wall structure is rectangular and has legs extending from each corner thereof, the legs being constructed and arranged to be received in recesses defined at sides of a cargo carrying surface of the flatbed vehicle.
28. The container of claim 22, wherein the fork receiving structure includes pairs of generally U-shaped members coupled to and extending from the bottom wall structure, each pair of U-shaped members being in spaced relation and a bottom surface of each U-shaped member being planar.
29. The container of claim 22, further including supporting structure mounted between the to the sidewall structures to provide rigidity to the container and being removable with respect to the sidewall structures so as not to obstruct entry into the interior space of the container.

~~30.~~ A method of transporting cargo on a flatbed vehicle comprising:

opening at least one of the front wall structure and the top wall structure and loading cargo into the interior space,

moving the container to the flatbed vehicle, the flatbed vehicle having a cargo carrying surface, opposing sides of the cargo carrying surface defining recesses, and

inserting the legs into the recesses to mount the container to the flatbed vehicle.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein, in the opening and closing steps, both the front wall structure and the top wall structure are opened and closed.

~~32. The method of claim 30, further including stacking another container on top of said container by inserting legs of said another container into recess of said container.~~

33. A method of delivering tires to a tire dealer comprising:

providing a container having a top wall structure; a bottom wall structure opposing the top wall structure, a front wall structure; a rear wall structure opposing the front wall structure; and a pair of sidewall structures disposed in opposing relation, the top wall structure, the bottom wall structure, the front wall structure, the rear wall structure and the sidewall structures being coupled so as to form an interior space,

opening at least one of the front wall structure and the top wall structure and loading tires into the interior space,

closing the opened wall structure,
moving the container to a flatbed vehicle,
securing the container to the flatbed vehicle,
transporting the container to a tire dealer,
removing the container from the flatbed vehicle, and leaving the container
at the tire dealer for unloading thereof.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein, in the opening and closing steps, both the
front wall structure and the top wall structure are opened and closed.

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